

A CENTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**REDESIGNING A COMMUNITY CENTER THAT FOCUSES ON
CONNECTING, UPLIFTING, AND SERVING THE COMMUNITY**

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SPRING 2020

A Center For Community Development

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Spring 2020
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Chicago, Illinois

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This reasearch was made possible by all the support I have recieved throughout my years at Ball State University. I am grateful for all my friends, professors, and family members who have contributed to my development. Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Lilia Ramirez. Without her love and support, I would not have been able to stay off my video games long enough to complete this.

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ABSTRACT

Gentrification is described as the process of renovating and improving a house or district so that it conforms to middle-class taste. This renovation or development focuses on improving the buildings or structures so that it can draw in new, higher-paying tenants. While this development may seem necessary, the results produce drastic changes to neighborhoods in which they take place. The goal of this research is not to combat gentrification, it is to shift the development from the building to the individuals of a neighborhood. The strategies of this research aim to combat the negative effects of gentrification by fostering development and building connection with the members of a community.

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THESIS PROPOSAL

1.1 INTRODUCTION

ISSUES

Disguised as revitalization through redevelopment, gentrification uproots low income and disadvantaged communities by creating buildings that share no connection to the history or culture that the existing community shares. Although generally well-intentioned, this development increases property values often leading to indirect negative consequences for the existing community members. Residents that have called the community home for generations are forced out due to being priced out, changing the make-up of the community, and taking away the features that once made it unique. This creates negative sentiments and resistance towards any improvements even if they provide necessary amenities such as low-income housing. In instances where development is necessary to meet the demands of communities, most residents are not able to see the improvements as they are pushed out and dispersed to different areas. According to a recent report from the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, 110,000 African Americans were displaced from gentrified neighborhoods such as Crenshaw, Los Angeles, and Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Harlem, New York¹. According to The Center for Disease Control, displacement caused by gentrification leads to “many health implications” on an individual to include: shorter life expectancy, higher cancer effects, greater infant mortality

rates, higher stress levels, injuries, and limited access to healthy food choices, transportation, quality schools, and transportation services.²

POSITION

As populations in cities grow, development becomes inevitable as there is a need for more housing and commercial spaces. In neighborhoods that are affected by gentrification and development, community centers can be pivotal in shifting the development from buildings to the members of a neighborhood.

¹ National Community Reinvestment Coalition. “Shifting Neighborhoods: Gentrification and Cultural Displacement in American Cities.” NCRC, October 18, 2019. <https://ncrc.org/gentrification/>.
² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Healthy Places.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed October 4, 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthypaces/healthtopics/gentrification.htm>.

RESEARCH

A community center is characterized as a place where people from a specific community can gather for social, educational, or recreational events. They promote exercise, social interaction, and cultural diversity while providing necessary programs and safe spaces for everyone to enjoy which can be critical in fighting the negative effects of gentrification. Whether it is a designated area, a religious building, or a recreational center, the driving force behind a community center is a designated place for community gathering. “A Community organized about some center for its own political and social welfare and expression; to peer into its own mind and life, to discover its own social needs and then to meet them, whether they concern the political field, the field of health, of recreation, of education, or of industry; such community organization is necessary if democratic society is to succeed and endure.”³ But community centers can be designed to go beyond those needs and provide communities with the means to improve their social, political, health, and education status.

Although community centers cannot be traced back to a single recorded source, due to the loose definition, the first instance of the term being used in the United States

3 Clinton S. Childs. A Years Experiment in Social Center Organization; an Account of the Activities Conducted in Public School 63, Manhattan. New York, 1913.
4 Harold W. Stubblefield, and Patrick Keane. Adult Education in the American Experience: from the Colonial Period to the Present. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994.
5 Chee Meow Seah. Community Centres in Singapore: Their Political Involvement. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1975.
6 Chee Meow Seah. Community Centres in Singapore: Their Political Involvement. Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1975.

was derived from the efforts of Edward J Ward and organizations in the 1920s to promote neighborhood democracies.⁴ These newly established community agencies pushed for reform, development, and advancements of communities to enhance the standard of living.

On July 1st, 1960, on the other side of the world, Singapore established The People’s Association to deal with communities that “lived in enclaves.”⁵ Their mission was to invest and stimulate the divided communities to work together through social, cultural, and educational activities. Their solution to this problem was community centers. By creating a united environment, community centers fostered good communication between the government and the communities.⁶

In the 1970s community centers were brought to Australia to deal with rising issues such as social isolation of families, women’s education, and domestic violence.

Today community centers have expanded from their intent of community gathering to include programs such as recreational, learning environments, and performing arts. These programs are crucial in uniting families to make their voices stronger and powerful. In an era where the rich are richer and the poor

are poorer, architects can create a unified and strong community through an impactful design of a community center that magnifies the voice of the community. How can architects design that center to reflect the qualities that the community sees as important? How can this design lead to combatting the negative effects of gentrification in the area?

1.2 THESIS OVERVIEW

QUESTION

So, if change is necessary, how can architects help communities survive the process of gentrification and see the benefits of development? How can a community center be used and designed so that development is not focused on the built but instead the members of a neighborhood?

THESIS

Community centers can assist architects in being part of a solution. The proposal is driven by the goal of developing and empowering the individual first which will lead to developing and empowering the neighborhood. The design of the community center should strengthen community ties and create a sense of ownership among residents that combat the resentment that comes with development. With the insertion of effective programs, integration of collaboration between the center and the neighborhood, and integration of cultural design features, a community center can create beneficial spaces that connect and uplifts the neighborhood in which it resides.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project is a redesign of an existing community art center located in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois. The design project includes upgrading the facility to house additional programs which will expand its reach to the community and redesigning the northern half of the site to compliment the new

community center. This redesign would address the negative resentment aspect of gentrification by creating a community center that responds and connects to the context, history, and culture of the neighborhood. This will help establish a connection that is key to the success of the design.

GOALS

The goals of this proposal are as follows:

To create a community center that includes programs that address specific community needs.

To create an environment that strengthens community ties through engagement and interaction.

To promote good social, mental, and physical health.

To foster curiosity, creativity, and interaction with the center and other members.

To respond to the history, culture, and makeup of the existing neighborhoods to connect the center to the community.



1.3SITE

SITE CRITERIA

The site selection was based off the following objectives:

- An existing community space/park/green space site
- At or near the center of the neighborhood
- At-risk or currently facing gentrification

SITE SELECTION

The proposal will focus on the ElevArte Community Studio in Pilsen Chicago, Illinois. The address is 1119 W Cullerton St, Chicago, IL 6060. The existing building measures approximately 185' x 102' while Dvorak (Anton) Park is approximately 410' x 340'. Figures 1.1-1.4 show the make-up of the community. This information was useful when establishing which programs could benefit the community the most.

USERS

The purpose of a community center is to bring together people from all walks of life. The idea that a community center should be focused on one specific group is exclusionary and contrary to the very purpose of the facility. Therefore, the intended users are people of all demographics.

ELEVARTE COMMUNITY STUDIO

1119 W CULLERTON ST
CHICAGO, IL

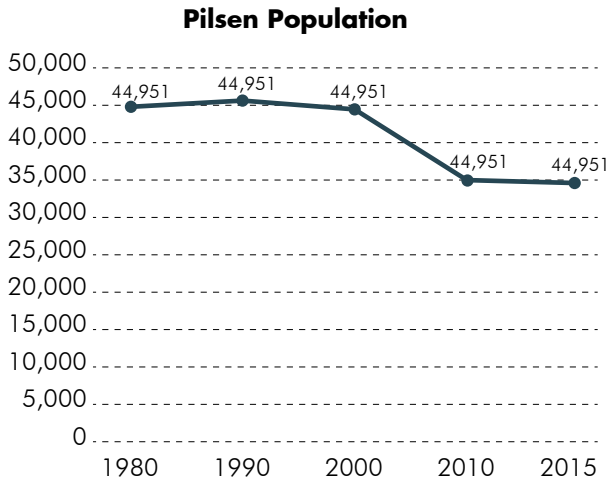


FIGURE 1.1 DATA SOURCE:1980, 1990, 2000, AND 2010 CENSUS. U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

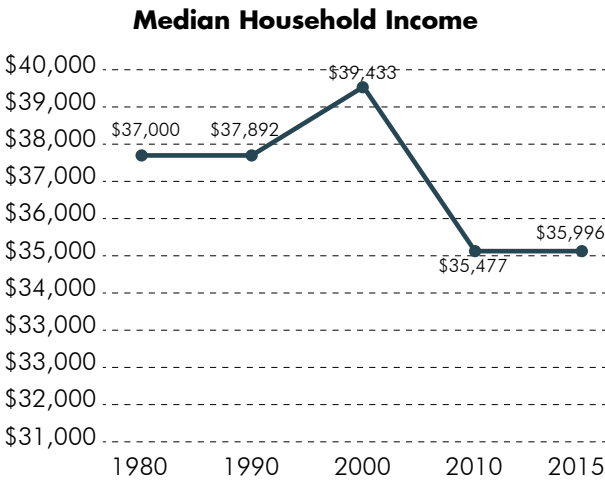


FIGURE 1.3 DATA SOURCE:1980, 1990, 2000, AND 2010 CENSUS. U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

Education Level (2015)

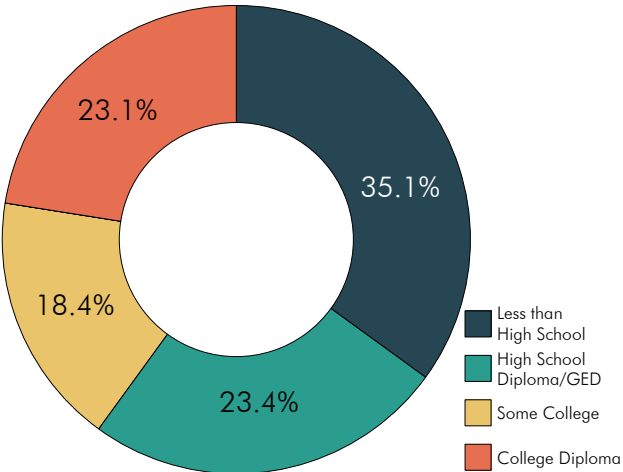


FIGURE 1.2 DATA SOURCE:1980, 1990, 2000, AND 2010 CENSUS. U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

Demographics (2015)

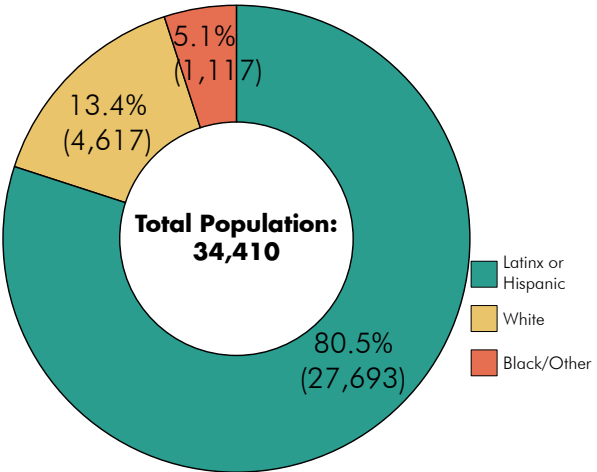


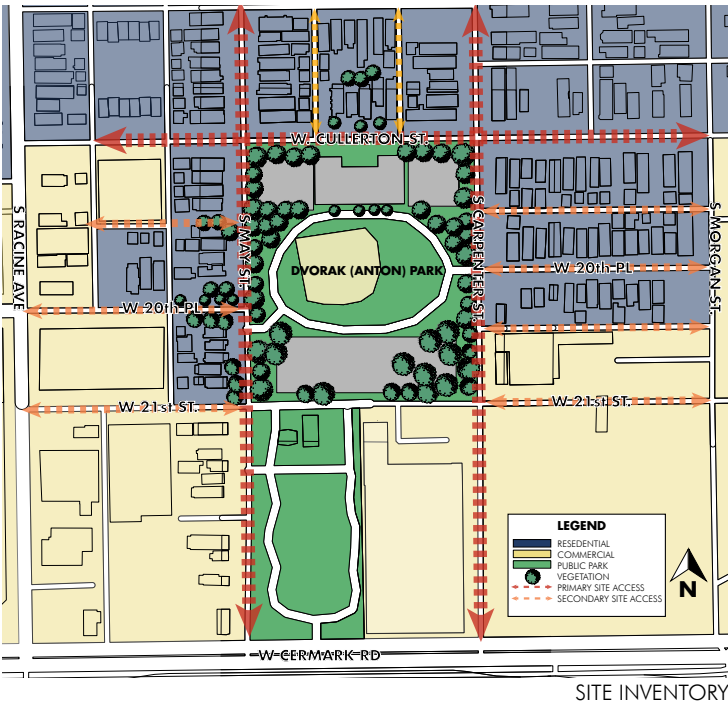
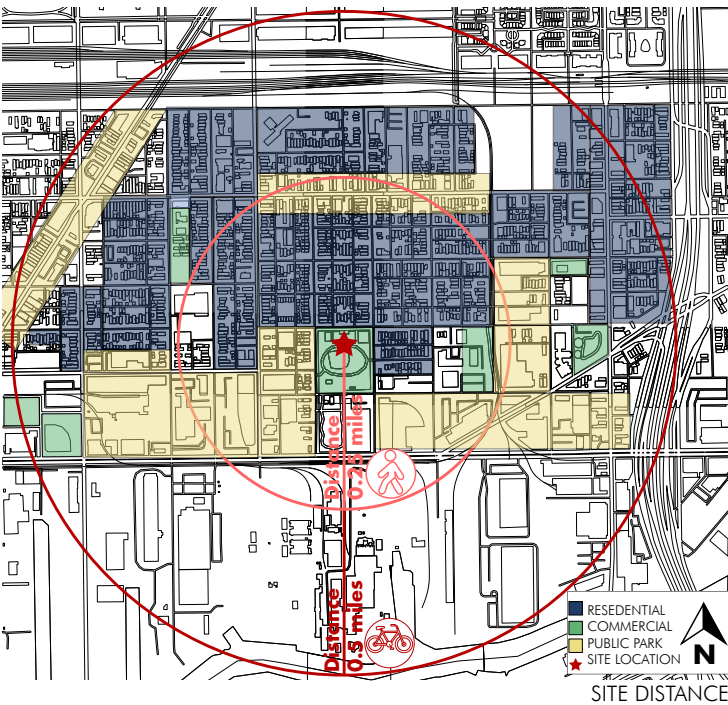
FIGURE 1.4 DATA SOURCE:1980, 1990, 2000, AND 2010 CENSUS. U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

SITE ANALYSIS

Located in a (mostly) housing district in the Pilsen neighborhood, the site is home to an existing community art studio whose goal is to “response to our community’s need for high-quality, deep-impact arts programs which engage youth in meaningful, positive experiences.” The location of the site is ideal as it is within reasonable walking distance to the north, east, and west regions of Pilsen.

The inventory of the site also allowed for the building blocks of the project to be established well before any design features were developed. Three major ideas/concepts were noted:

1. Pilsen Neighborhood is broken into **three categories** residence, industrial, and commercial.
2. Access to the site consist of **primary** (major streets) and **secondary** (alleys and side streets) routes
3. The site is **public park** which is crucial to the Pilsen Neighborhood



1.4EXISTING CONDITIONS

SITE

The purpose of identifying the current condition of the site was to answer the following questions,

How could existing design elements be replicated in the redesign of the community center? How could they be used so that the design is accepted by the community and viewed as “just more gentrification”?

The characteristics of the Pilsen neighborhood was used as the foundation as the thesis transitioned into the design stage. From multiples site visits and observations there was a sense of pride in the history that was shared. The side of buildings is used as blank canvases to bring life to the site and make a connection with the members of the neighborhood. These murals displayed events, people, and places that made a connection to the shared heritage.

Other notable features include the relationship between the existing community center and its surrounding. The existing community center responds architecturally to its context by using a common material such as bricks and its scale does not tower above any surrounding buildings. The community center also interacts with the park by using the space to hold events.



4. NEIGHBORHOOD MURAL
CARPENTER ST.



6. ELEVARTE COMMUNITY CENTER
CORNER OF CULLERTON ST. + CARPENTER ST.



8. NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY STORE
CULLERTON ST.



5. ELEVARTE COMMUNITY CENTER
SOUTH FACADE



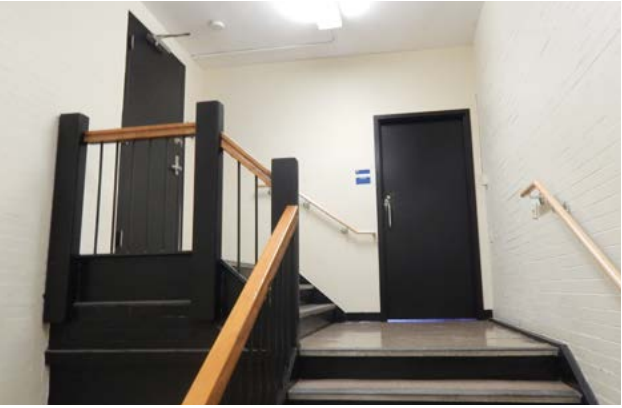
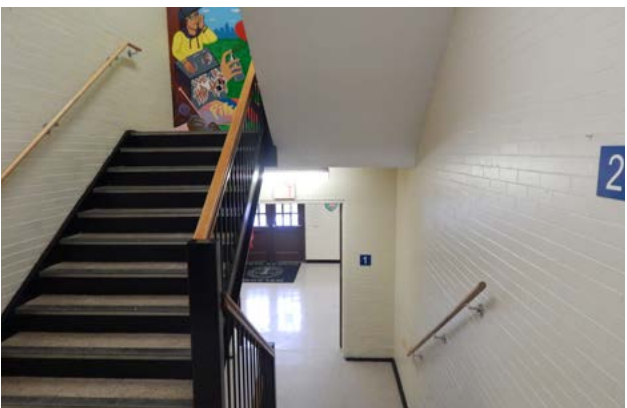
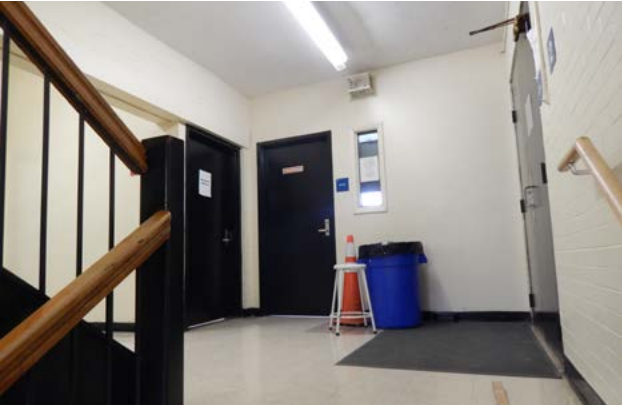
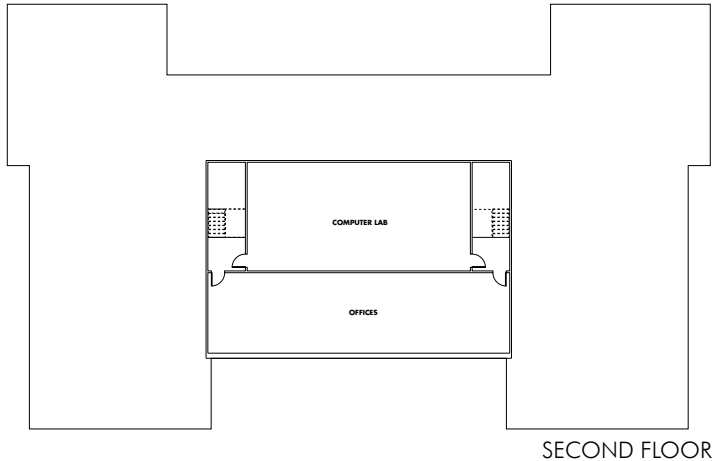
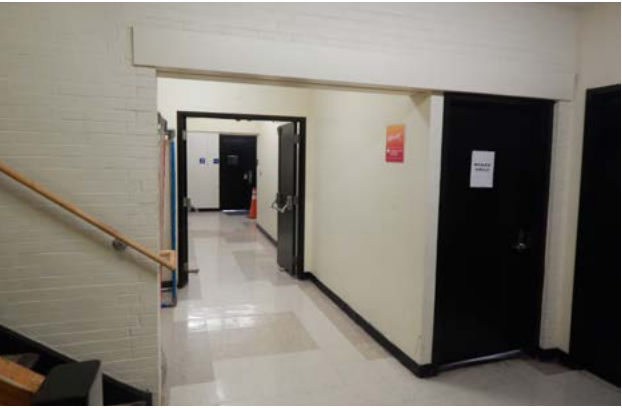
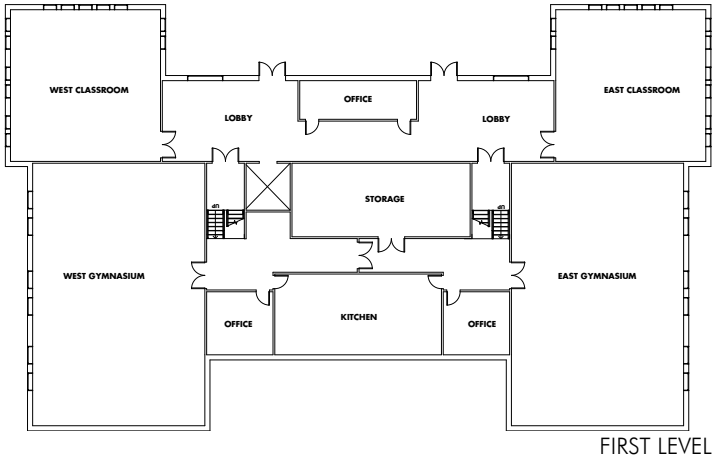
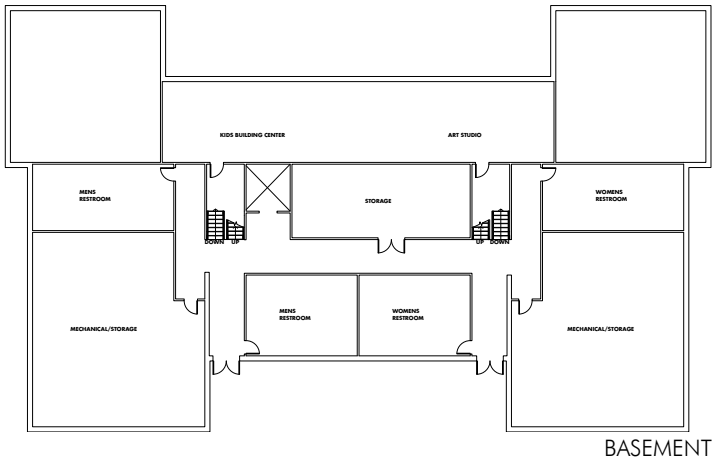
7. ELEVARTE COMMUNITY CENTER
NORTH FACADE



9. TRAIL AND BASBALL FIELD
DVORAK (ANTON) PARK

INTERIOR

The condition of the interior determined the need to completely redesign the community center. While the existing design has some positive design features and effective programs, the space would be inadequate for an expansion. The goal moving forward was to repeat these positive features and complement them with additional ones.



1.5 PRECEDENTS

THE PINCH LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER

JOHN LIN + OLIVER OTTERVAERE
CHINA

The Pinch Library is a government and univeristy led project to memorialize an earthquake that devastated a small community. Rising to a peak, the form of the building is used as a metaphor to show how the community can once again rise up and once again build the community that was once there befor the events.

Pinch Library and Community Center brings together two programs that can be used to benefit the community. This can be repeated in the proposed design by carefully selecting which programs would be most useful to the proposed community.

This design sucessfully connects to the community by creating a memorial on of the siites that was effected by earthquakes in 2012. The simplicity and repetitive nature of the roof allowed for the community members to participate in the construioin of the project. The skills learned during the construction could be used later in the reconstruction of their own homes. This created a deeper connection and greater sense of pride with the community center. Although this may not be achieveable due to regulations in the proposed site, the concept of providing areas to teach skills that can be



19. ROOF



20. INTERACTION



21. BOOKS

VISTAS DE CERRO GRANDE COMMUNITY CENTER

ARQUITECTURA EN PROCESO
CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO

Vistas de Cerro Grande was designed and constructed in reponcse to high crime rate in a neighborhood located in the mountains of Northern Mexico. Based of expensive research, the Mexican government promoted three projects that addressed the needs of the community while also promotng safety and a healthier life-style through public spaces and heathlth facilities.

The use of large stones relate to the site of the village while the forms relate to the mountains that surround the site while the interior of the building implements a more modern approach to architecture.

This precedent emphasized the importance of having open public spaces and the effects it has on a community. By implementing public spaces on site, the community center can create a safer envrionment while also promoting an active lifestyle.

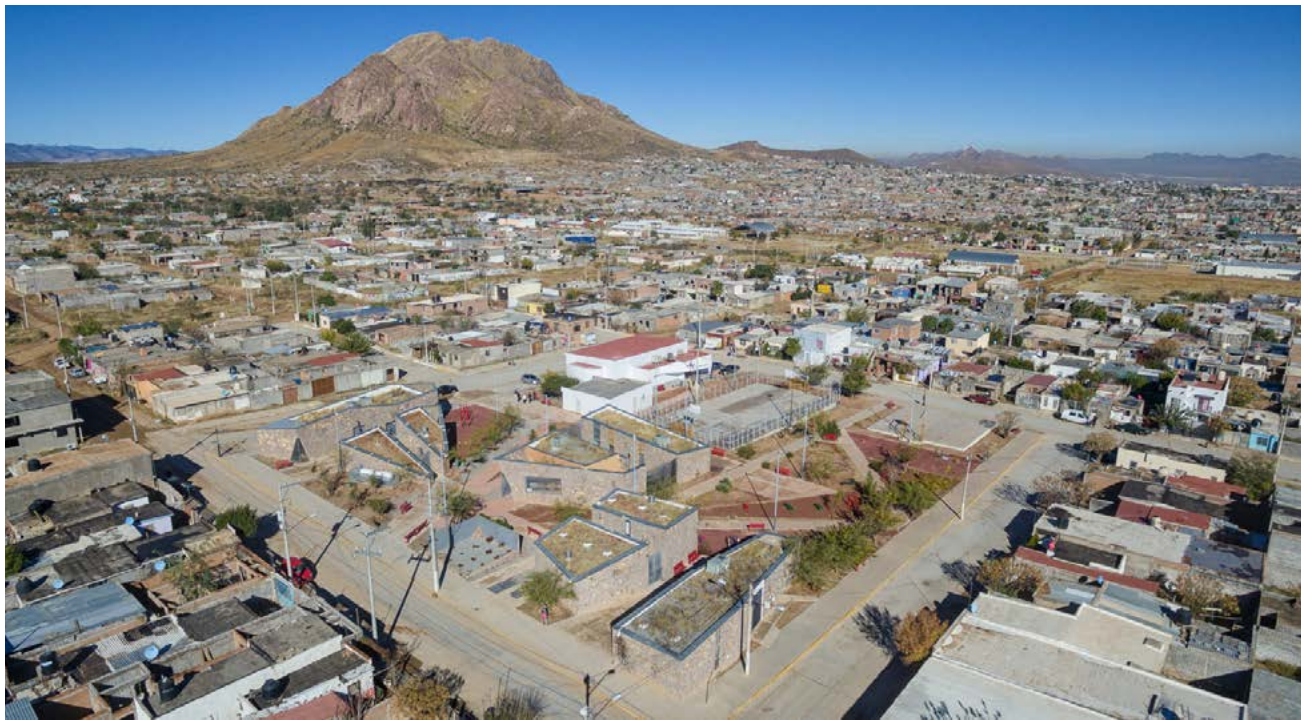
This can be used as a precedent by providing programs that are vital to a community. In the proposed site, affordable housing is a problem. A proposed program within the design could be a operating base that provides assistance in finding affordable apartment and supporting first time homebuyers to become mortgage ready. Other programs can include a community garden space that offers access to fresh produce to encourage a healthier lifestyle.



22. SITE PLAN VIEW



23. PLAZA



24. BIRDS EYE VIEW

GEORGE PEARL HALL
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND
PLANNING
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

By exposing elements such as the mechanical, structural, and electrical components, George Pearl Hall encourages the process of learning. This can be key into fostering a learning environment as visual examples are displayed all around the building. This concept can be applied within a community center by first identifying which skills are being taught and then complimenting those classes by visually displaying the features. For example, an exposed structure would benefit a welding class by showing a plate welded onto a column.

As seen in George Pearl Hall, a modern twist to an exsisting style can lessen the sentiment around the community that this is just another gentrification project by relating to the culture of the community. George Pearl Hall uses materials that are common in the culture and history of New Mexico. The material usage and style of architecture could be key in connecting a modern building to the Latinx based community.

A community center can be designed around teaching adults skills that can help them achieve a healthier lifestyle and a higher paying job. Introducing design features like that seen in George Pear Hall can create envrionments beneficial to learning and for a specific skillset.



25. GALLERY



26. FACADE



27. CURTAIN WALL

ENRICO FERMI SCHOOL
RENOVATION
TORINO ITALY

The renovation of the former school approaches the concept of “opening up its doors” to reengage the community through learning. This learning environment open itself up by providing gathering spaces in the form of courtyards and exterior semi-enclosed circulation for the students, facult, members of the community to enjoy. The school serves a purpose in the structure of the community and the design does not seperate it from the community but encourages connection. This enhances the support of the youth through the community.

This building is successful in creating an interior environment for the students by “opening” up to the site through large windows.

This can be used as a precedent in the way the design connects and allows the users to be supported by the community. In this precedent the students are under the age of 18 but adults still have the ability to meet and exchange ideas in green spaces and exterior walkways. This strategy can be used in the design by creating environments for multiple age levels to learn effectively.



28. VIEW INTO CLASSROOM



29. CLASSROOM



30. EXTERIOR

1.6PROGRAMS

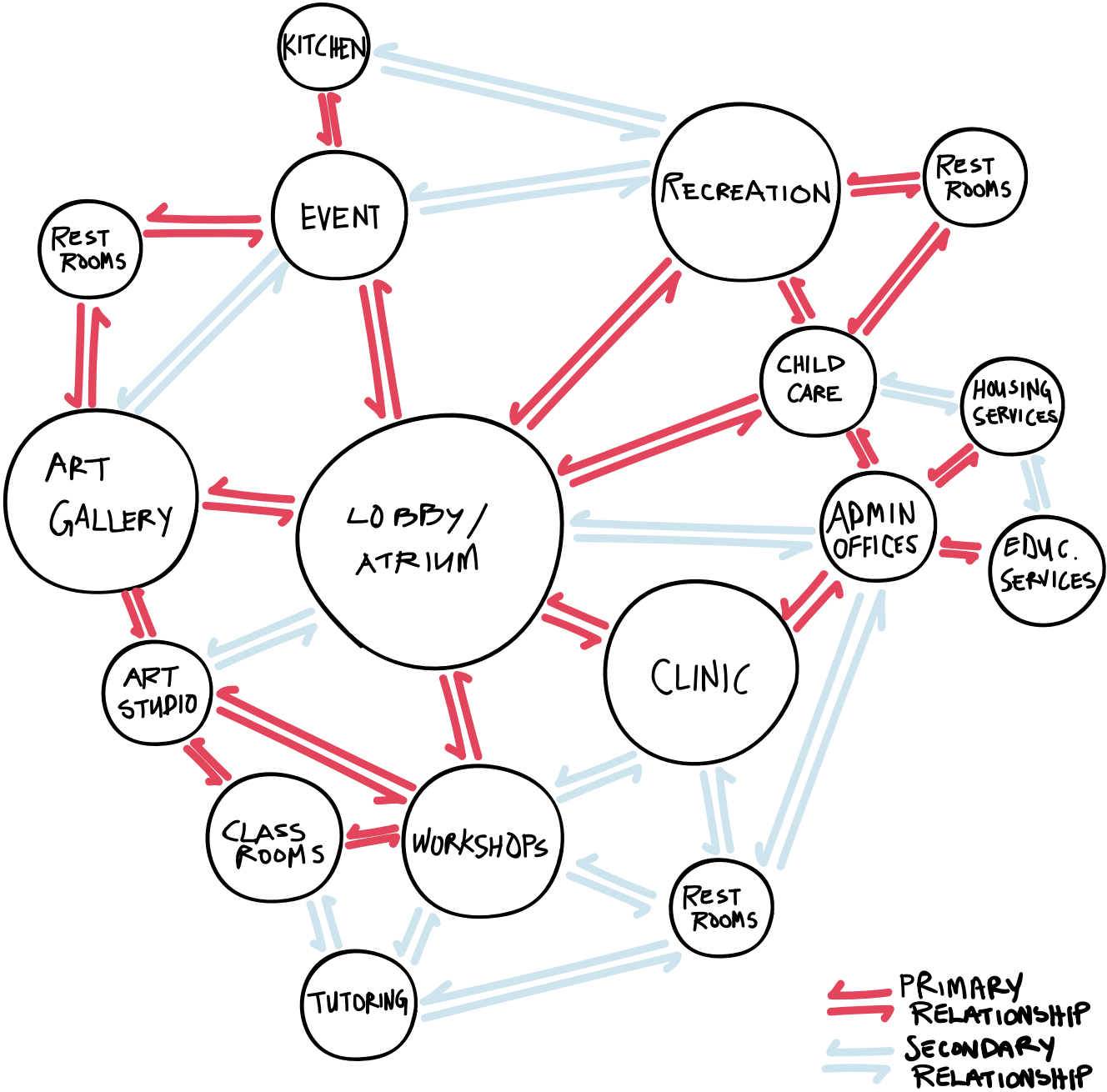
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The programs included in the community center are vital to providing a design that serves and benefits the community. These programs are based on addressing the negative effects that gentrification causes, the existing conditions, and precedents. Some examples of addressing a negative effect are providing a clinic that provides access to basic health facilities at a low-cost rate and a workshop which could provide the space necessary to refine or learn new trade skills such as welding or carpentry.

Each program serves a purpose for the development of the individual, community, or for supporting the daily operations. Individual Development programs such as workshops aim to develop individual skills or promote individual wellness. They are intended for users who have specific needs such as housing placement assistance or childcare. Community Development programs aim to develop larger groups. Programs such as event spaces allow for interaction and bonding where social skills and networking can occur. They are intended for users who do not have specific needs but can still benefit from the community center.

PROGRAM	QUANTITY	SF NEEDS
Art Gallery	1	2,200 SF
Art Studio	1/2	1,200 SF
Event Space	1	7,000 SF
Counseling Center	1/2	1,200 SF
Workshops	3	2,050 SF
Clinic	1	1,250 SF
Child Care	2	1,500 SF
Classrooms	3	2,500 SF
Lobby	1	1,500 SF
Kitchen	1	625 SF
Admin Offices	4	1,500 SF
Restrooms	2	400 SF
Storage	2	1,000 SF
Electrical	2	500 SF
Mechanical	2	1,000 SF
TOTAL		24,925 SF

	Room Data + Criteria	Quantity	Public Access	Privacy	Daylight/ Views	Skylight	Technology	Electrical Equip. (Special)	HVAC Equip. (Special)	Plumbing	Notes
Individual Development	Classrooms	3	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Small to medium classroom size 10-15 people
	Counseling Center	1	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Tutoring Services, Mentorship, High School Completion,
	Workshop	2	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Work Tables. Available for multitude of skills
	Design Studio	1	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Technology and small art studio space
	Offices	4	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Housing Assistance, Education Services, Administration
	Clinic	1	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	small non-emergency facility
	Child Care	2	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Direct Access to outside. Located near playground and entrance
Community Development	Collaborative Gallery	1	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Open space, central, easy access
	Event Space	1	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Seating. Flexible facility Opens up to the outside
	Lobby	1	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Typical. Can serve as an additional event space
	Recreation	1	Y	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Flexible for multiple sports
	Rose Gardens	1	Y	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Exterior Location
	Community gardens	1	Y	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Exterior Location
Support Facilities	Kitchen	1	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Cabinets + Stove + Fridge + Storage + Freezer
	Restrooms	2	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Typical
	Storage	2	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Typical
	Electrical	2	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Typical
	Mecanical	2	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Typical



NOTE: FLOW DIAGRAM SHOWS THE ORIGINAL LIST OF PROGRAMS

2

DESIGN PROCESS AND RESULTS

2.1 DESIGN OBJECTIVES

SUMMARY

The research portion of the thesis focused on determining how a community center could benefit the members of the Pilsen neighborhood and assist them in combating the negative effects of gentrification. By identifying problems common with gentrification, documenting the site, analyzing precedents, and establishing resources that a new community center would provide, the research phase was able to establish a foundation to build upon. As the thesis transitioned into the design phase, the focus shifted to how the design could build a connection between the two parties and then create an environment that fosters development and uplifts the neighborhood. Both were viewed as equally important to the success of the project.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Redesigning a community center that enhances the current state of the neighborhood by:

- Enhancing the programs currently offered by the existing community art center
- Enhancing the reach of the community center by offering additional programs/facilities
- Enhancing the interaction between community, building, and context
- Enhancing the overall life of residents by promoting a healthier lifestyle

SETTING EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of the design will be based off how sucessfully the design responds to the context of the neighborhood it is loacted in while distinguishing itself from it. Introducing design ideas that create a beneficial environment and atmosphere which promotes community and individual development.

ANALYZING SOLUTIONS

Analyzing precedents and drawing design features/solutions which can be applied to the project. This means answering questions such as: How can we create beneficial enviornments? How can the building connect on a deeper level to the community? Which new programs would have the most postive impact on the community.

PREDICTING EFFECTIVENESS

The design of the building will draw a positive reaction from the community members. This can lead to an increase use by the community members and benefits can begin to be derived

The building will promote self-identity and self-worth.

INTEGRATING DECISIONS

During preliminary design stage, features will be drawn from precedents, existing community art center, and the neighborhood site. This will be applied to create a design which integrate all three parts. Additional integration of decisions include:

The integration of building with the context/surrounding environment and buildings

The integration building with community members/residents

2.2ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS

CRITERIA

The environment created by the design is critical to the success of the proposal moving forward. The goal is to create an environment that allows people to come together and create opportunities for social, mental, and intellectual development. Design strategies that affect the indoor environment are light quality, air quality, and implementation of sustainable techniques.

AIR QUALITY

Adequate air circulation can be achieved through the implementation of effective mechanical systems. Zoned HVAC systems would allow for flexibility and control of comfort levels for the intended users who occupy the space. Design strategies that allow for natural ventilation within the building would allow for a connection to the exterior environment.

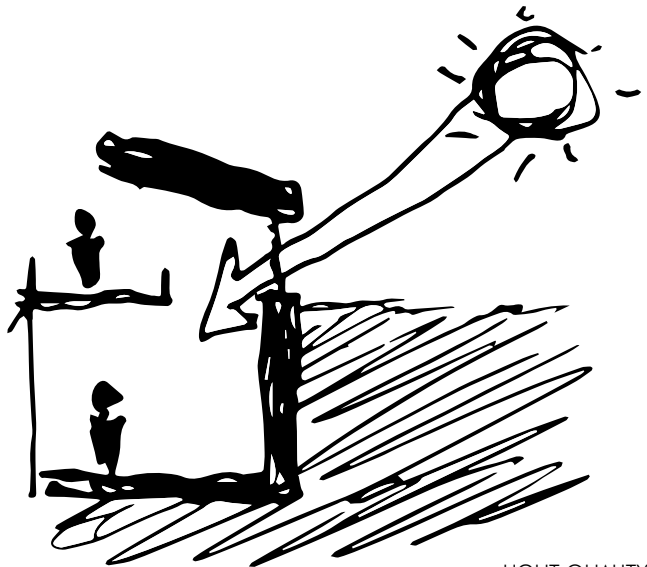
LIGHTING

“Good lighting in the workplace with well-lit task areas is essential for optimizing visual performance, visual comfort and ambience, especially with an ageing workforce. In fact, over the last two decades medical science has consistently shown that light has a positive influence on health and wellbeing.”⁷ With an improper amount of lighting, the environment can change from an inviting one to an unappealing place.

SUSTAINABLE TECHNIQUES

The designs of our buildings have a

significant impact on our surrounding physical environment. By implementing sustainable techniques, we can reduce the carbon footprint that construction produces. These techniques can include the use of sustainable materials such as timber or integration of green roofs to reduce energy loads and create an additional environment zone on top of the community center.



LIGHT QUALITY

2.3BEHAVIORAL CONCEPTS

CRITERIA

These concepts affect the behavior that is encouraged or promoted within the design.

ACCESSIBILITY

A design that considers multiple users of all abilities promotes an inviting environment. The intent is to encourage an active behavior that can lead to social development as well as exposure and consideration to different abilities.

BUILDING INTERACTION

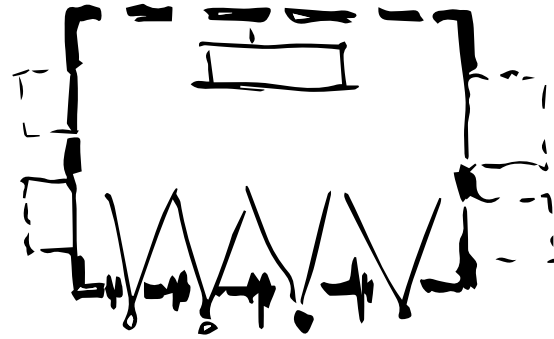
A building that high encourages interaction and customization encourages ownership and builds a connection to space and/or building. Something as simple as having a designated wall for local artists to display their talents or using blackboard paint on interior walls for children to draw can create a link between the users and the built environment.

INSIDE OUTSIDE RELATIONSHIP

This concept promotes curiosity by displaying what goes on within a space. By displaying what happens within a workshop classroom on the outside, curiosity is stimulated in a child. This could be the spark for the appreciation or interest of that activity.

AWARENESS OF SURROUNDINGS

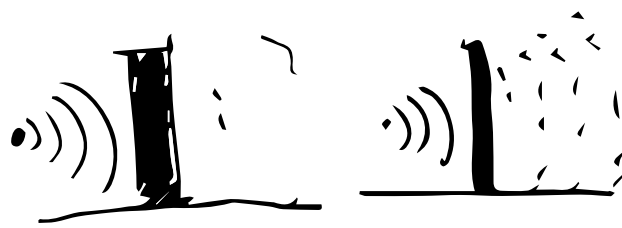
This concept promotes the comfortability of users. An example would be designing for proper acoustics. If a recreation space is adjacent to a reading space, the ideal scenario would be limiting noise penetration. This can affect the level of comfortability for the intended use.



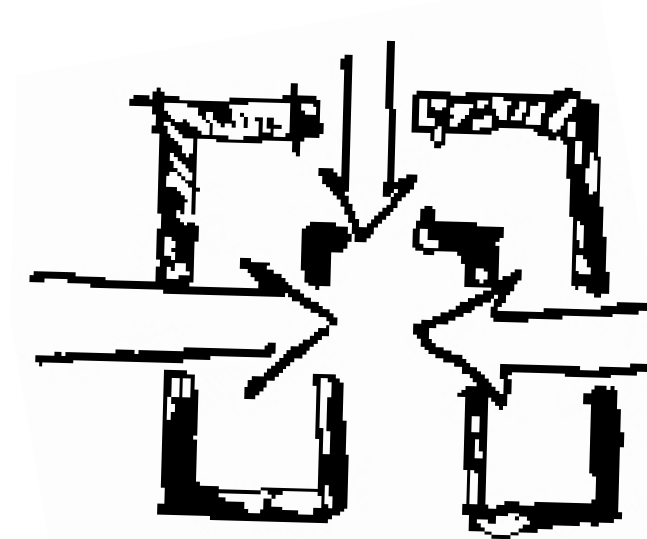
INSIDE OUTSIDE RELATIONSHIP



BUILDING INTERACTION



AWARNESS OF SURROUNDINGS



ACCESSIBILITY

⁷ Kralikova, Ruzena, and Emil Wessely. “Lighting Quality, Productivity and Human Health.” Proceedings of the 27th International DAAAM Symposium 2016 DAAAM Proceedings, 2016, 0059–65. <https://doi.org/10.2507/27th.daaam.proceedings.009>.

2.4 EXPERIENTIAL CONCEPTS

CRITERIA

These concepts affect the experience that is encouraged or promoted within the design.

LEVELS OF PRIVACY

A mindful arrangement and separation of programs create levels of privacy that will promote comfortability for the users. This is essential in programs such as art studios, clinics, and counseling centers.

BALANCE BETWEEN BUILT AND EXISTING

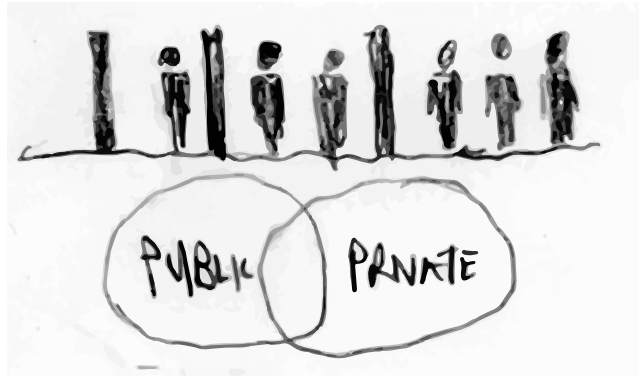
This concept creates a balanced experience between the community center and the park in which it is located. The intent is to design a facility that does not overpower the purpose that public parks serve to the community. Users will visit the site to use the community center and the park.

BLUR BETWEEN BUILT AND ENVIRONMENT

This concept begins to look at how the proposal will blur the division between the park and the built environment. Whether they work hand in hand or complement each other, the intended experience is seamlessly transitioning from the natural environment to the building.

OASIS

Understanding that access to public green space is limited in a city like Chicago, this concept intends to highlight the oasis experience that is felt when visiting a park and bring that same experience to the community center.



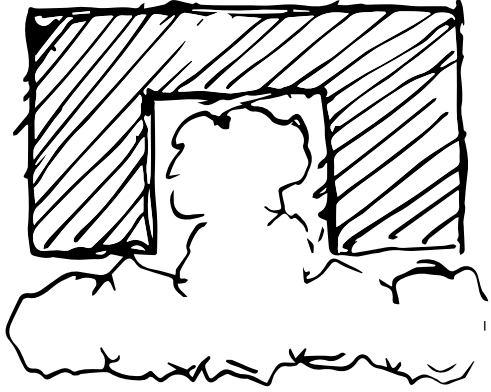
LEVELS OF PRIVACY



OASIS



BLUR BETWEEN BUILT AND ENVIRONMENT



BALANCE BETWEEN BUILT AND EXISTING

2.5 CULTURAL CONNECTION

COLOR

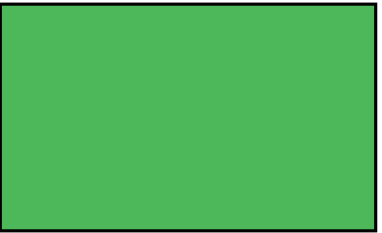
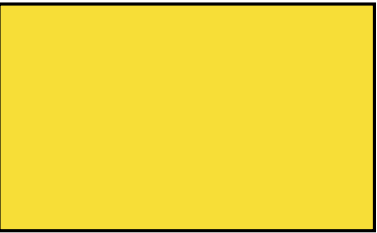
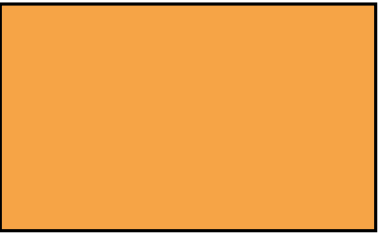
From personal experience, color played a huge part in my life and can be seen throughout architecture, art, and life in Latin-American countries. Color allows for the building to come to life and was a strategy used throughout the design. Whether it is applied through material selection or later through painting, color is universal. It can create a connection and bring life to the atmosphere of the community center.



31. RED BRICKS



32. COLORFUL HOUSES



MATERIAL

Another key contributor to creating a connection to the neighborhood is material. Materials commonly seen in architecture throughout Latin-American architecture can be replicated in the design. The material selection was also based on the impact they had on the environment. While materials such as concrete are common, they have a negative impact on the environment during the production phase. Using alternative materials such as fiber cement panels to replace concrete reduces the negative impact and relates to the goal of creating a beneficial design.



STANDING SEAM METAL ROOF
REPLICATES TERRA COTTA



FIBER CEMENT
REPLICATES CONCRETE



CLT AND GLULAM
MATERIALS

COLLABORATION

The design of the community center can allow for the opportunity for two levels of collaboration. By creating spaces for specific programs such as clinics, childcare, and classrooms, established organizations in the community can bring their resources into the community center. This first level is identified as community collaboration. The second level is called individual collaboration and it is produced through artwork. By designing the interior spaces to become blank canvases, local artists can display their works for the neighborhood to see. This can be expanded upon by providing additional “canvases” for anyone to show their skills. By providing these spaces, the community center would reflect the existing site conditions and create a deeper connection with the neighborhood.



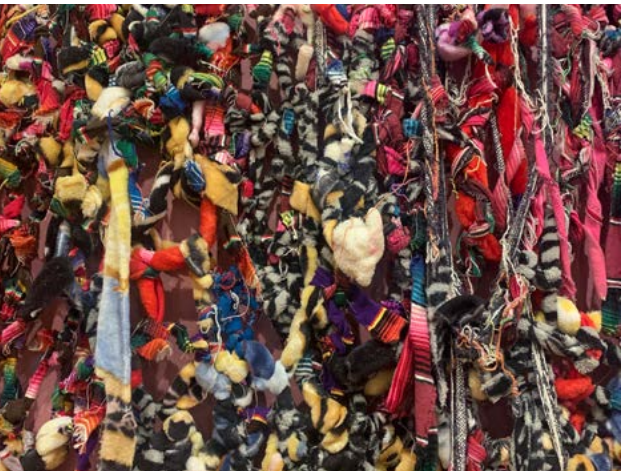
33. NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
MEXICAN ART
PILSEN, CHICAGO, IL



34. ARTWORK 1



35. ARTWORK 2

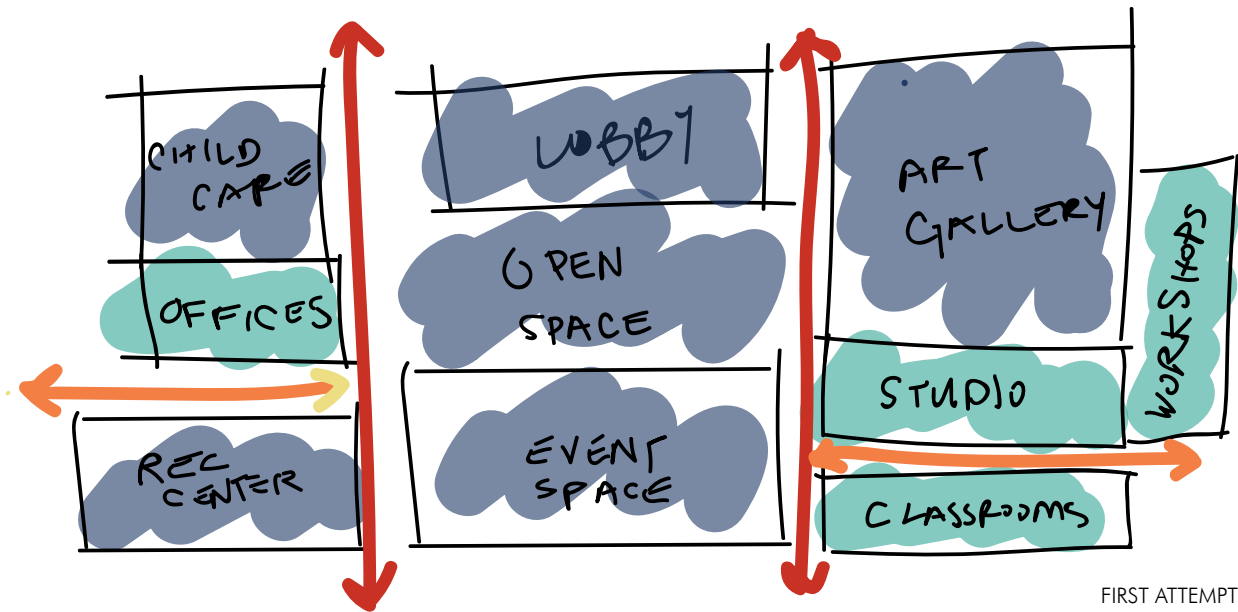
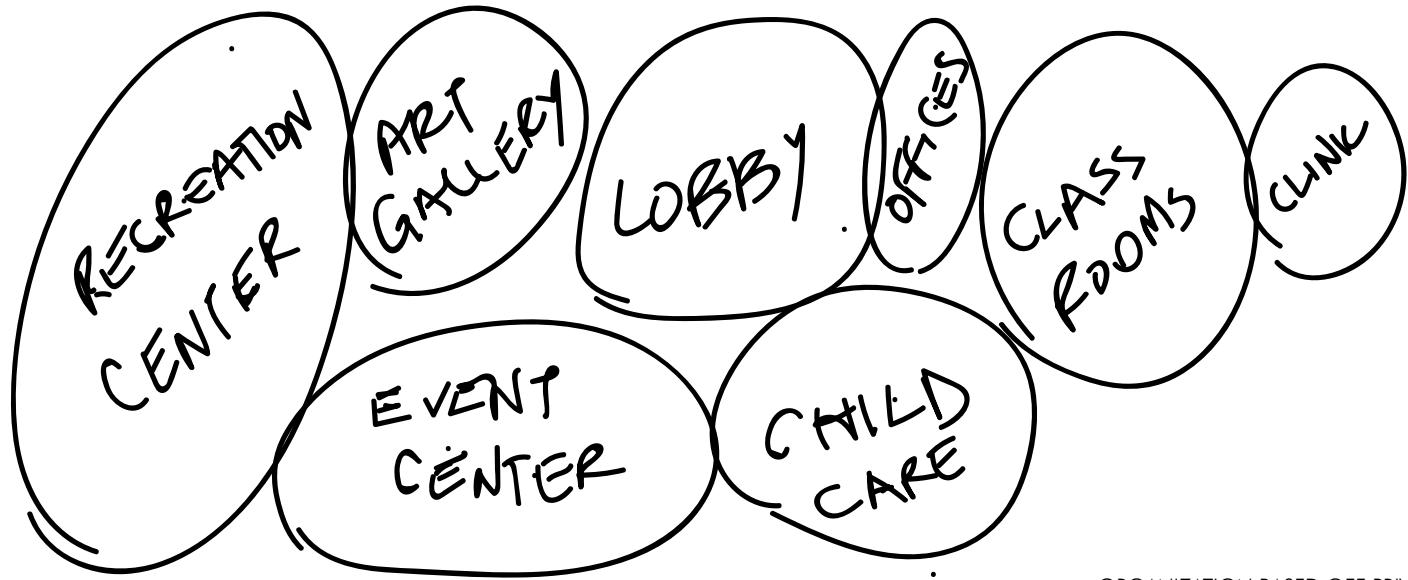
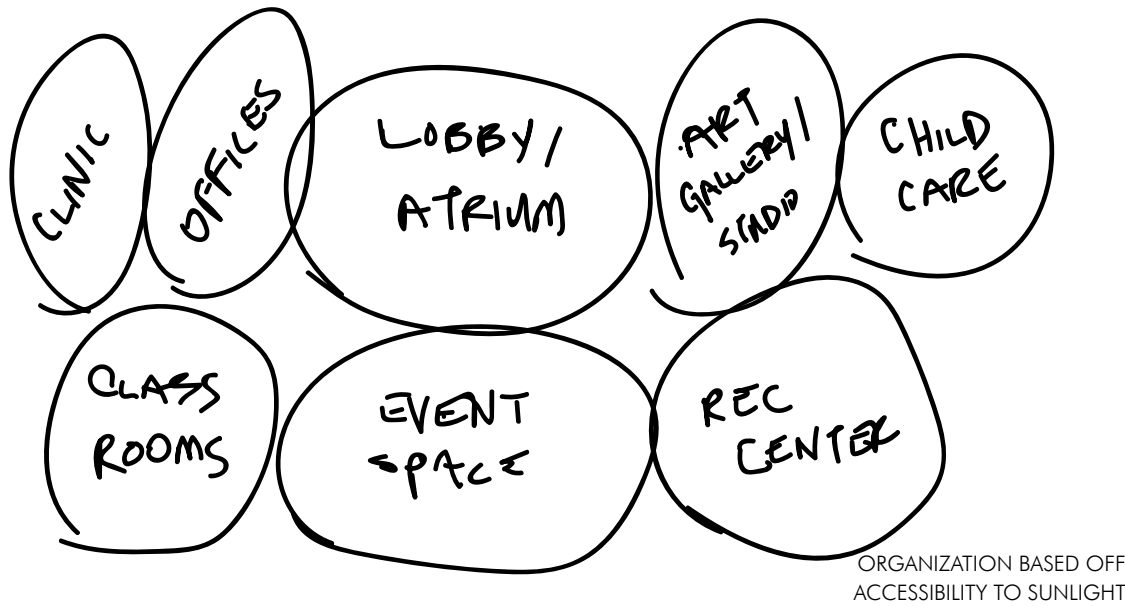
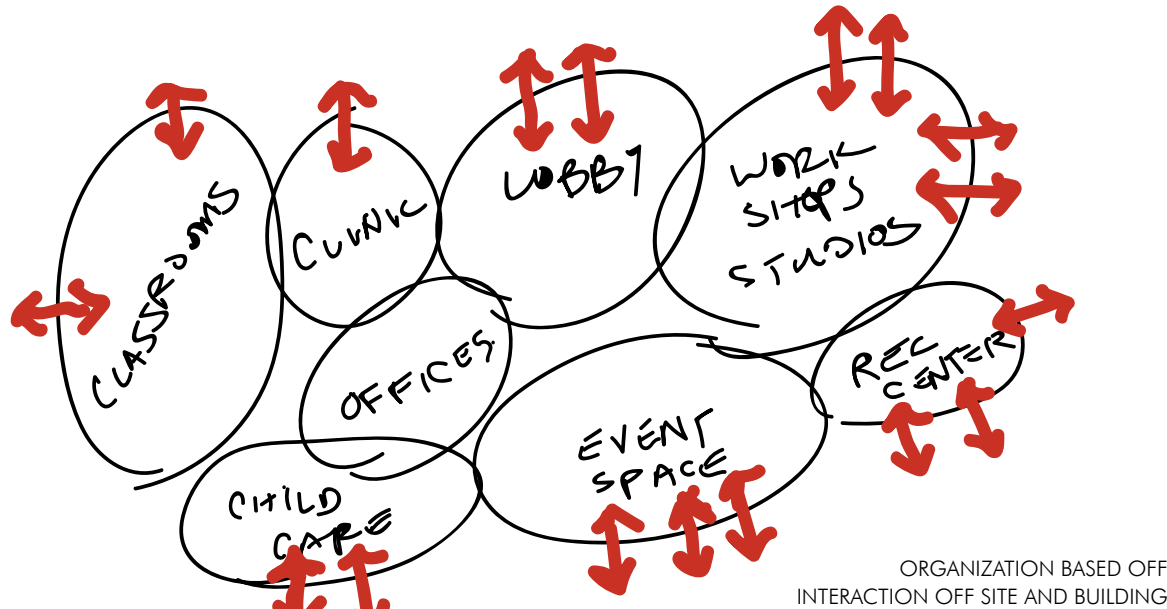


36. ARTWORK 3

2.6CONCEPT STRATEGIES

APPLICATION THROUGH FLOOR PLANS

As the thesis moved forward, the environmental, behavioral, and experiential concepts were applied to the different aspects of the design of the building. The first area of application was to the organization of programs within the building. Multiple iterations of floor plans were developed and organized by prioritizing one design element. After common placement of programs were identified, the final layout was developed.

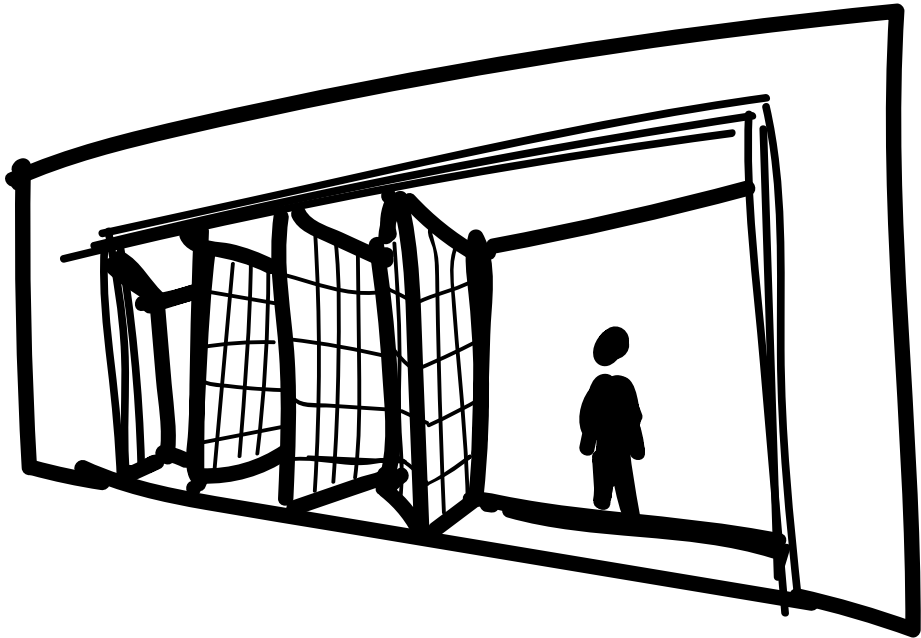


2.7DESIGN STRATEGIES

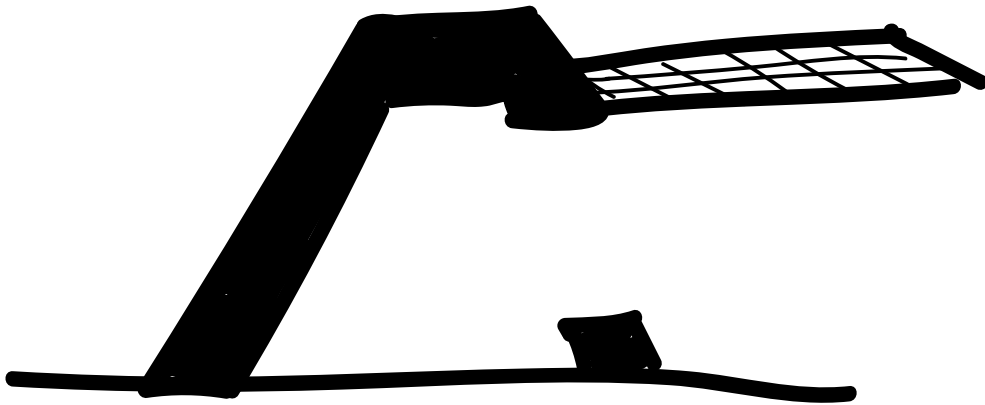
APPLICATION THROUGH DESIGN STRATEGIES

The established environmental, behavioral, and experiential concepts were also applied to design strategies. This was the final step before the final design could begin. This part answer questions such as, how can the design improve the inside-outside relationship of the programs? How can the design improve light quality be improved within the building? The goal of this phase was to make every concept into a strategy that could be used to create a beneficial atmosphere.

INSIDE OUTSIDE RELATIONSHIP

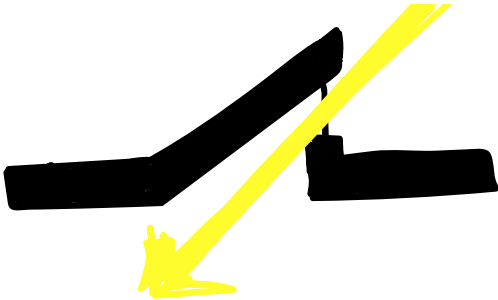


OPERABLE PARTITIONS

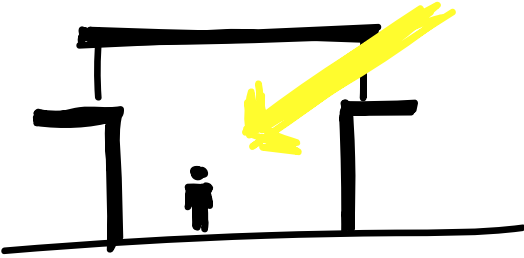


OPERABLE WINDOWS

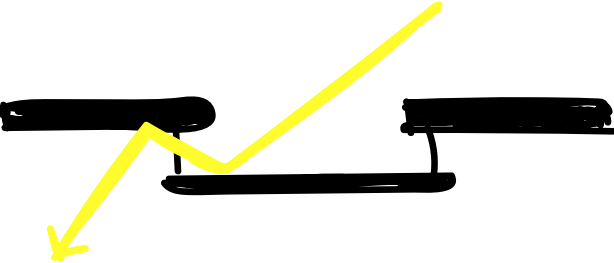
BENEFICIAL ENVIRONMENT



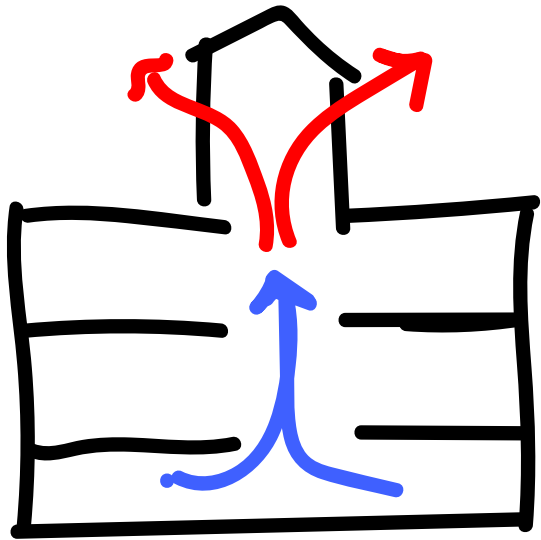
SKYLIGHT



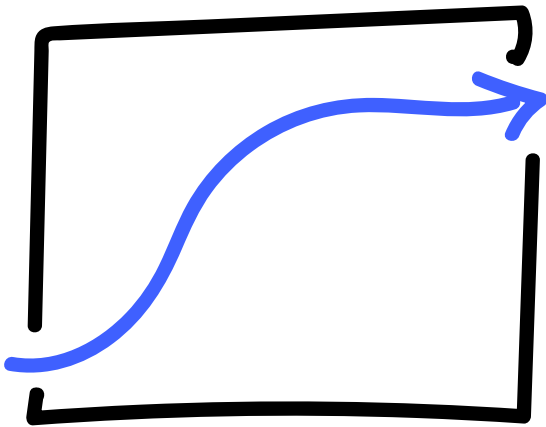
RAISED CEILING MOMENTS



DROPPED CEILING MOMENTS



STACK EFFECT



CROSS VENTILATION

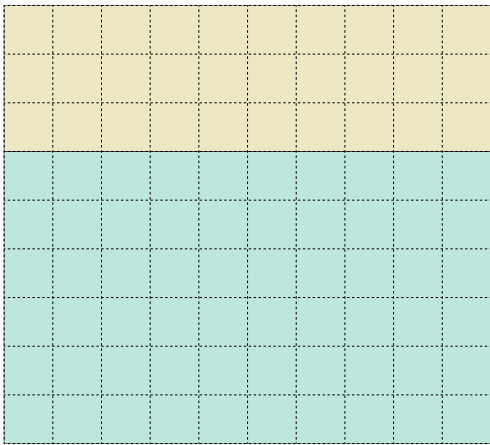
2.8 FORM PROCESS

SUMMARY

The first step in the final design was to create a form that would serve as the blank canvas for all the research, analysis, and design strategies to be applied. First was the finalization of the footprint of the building. The footprint was based on the 3 points established from the site analysis. They are:

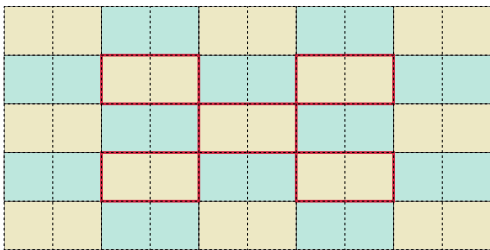
- 1. Pilsen Neighborhood is broken into **three categories** residence, industrial, and commercial.
- 2. Access to the site consist of **primary** (major streets) and **secondary** (alleys and side streets) routes
- 3. The site is **public park** which is crucial to the Pilsen Neighborhood

The form was later derived from the footprint as seen in the illustrations.



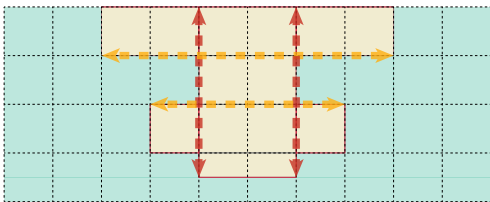
1. SITE IDENTIFICATION

Site consists of a two different regions/zones. Building and Landscape



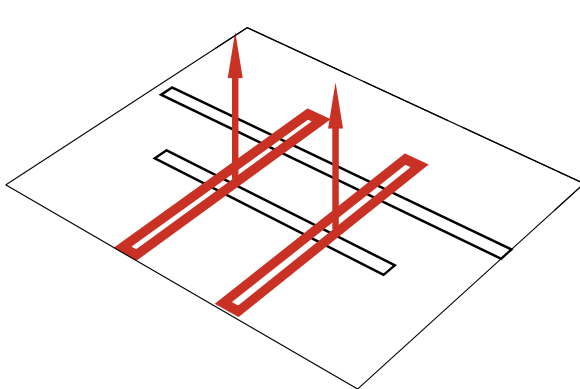
2. REPITITION + IDENTIFICATION

Regions were repeated with a simple pattern in the building region. Landscape region remained untouched. 5 zones were singled out.



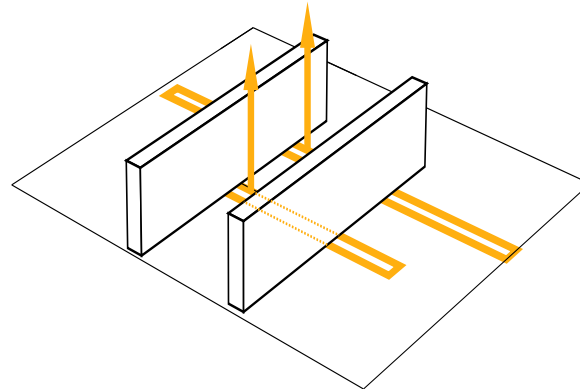
3. FINAL

The 5 zones were simplified to a final form. A primary and secondary path connects the zones much like primary and secondary routes connect the site to the neighborhood.



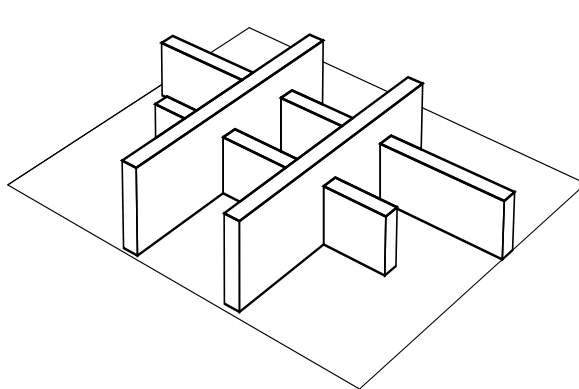
PRIMARY EXTRUSION

The building form began with the extrusion of the path connecting the 5 zones. The N-S path was identified as the primary path and extruded.



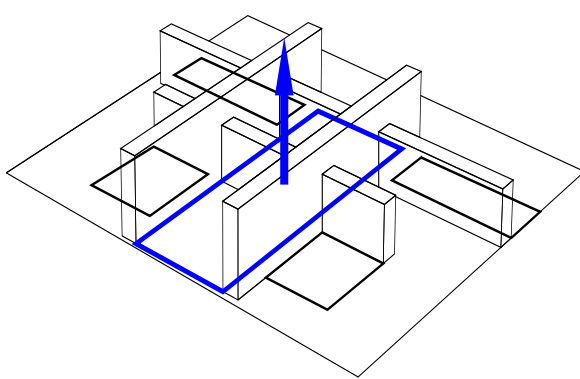
SECONDARY EXTRUSION

The secondary path connecting E-W was identified and extruded.



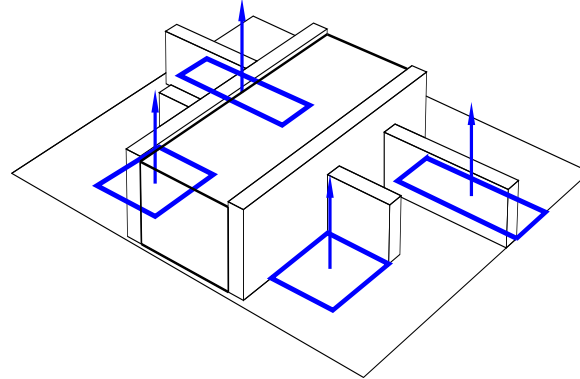
FINAL

A hierarchy was established to emphasize the primary and secondary paths.



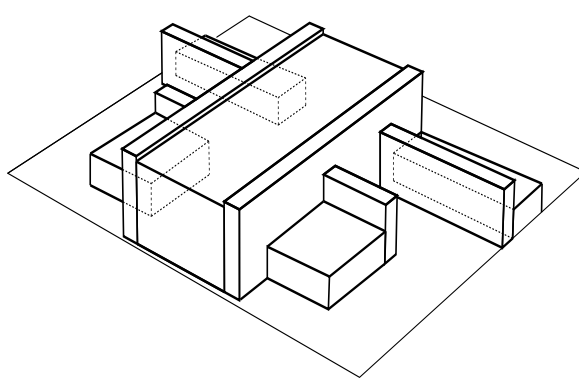
PRIMARY EXTRUSION

5 zones were identified. The central zone was identified as a primary zone. and extruded.



SECONDARY EXTRUSION

The remaining 4 zones were identified as secondary zones and extruded.



FINAL

FORM PROCESS RESULTS

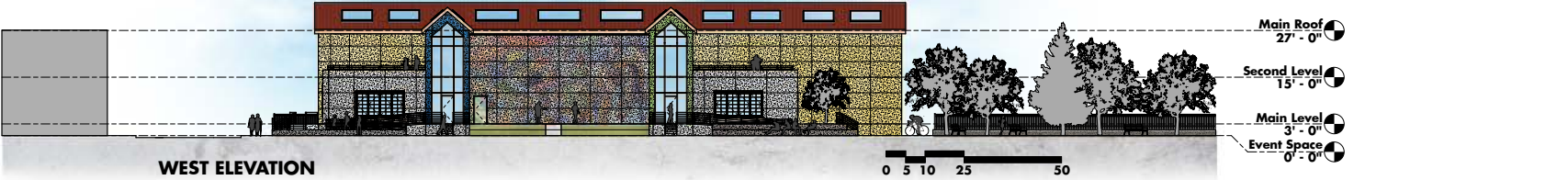
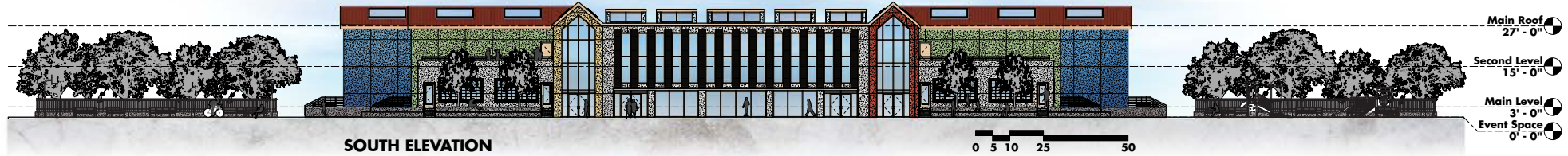
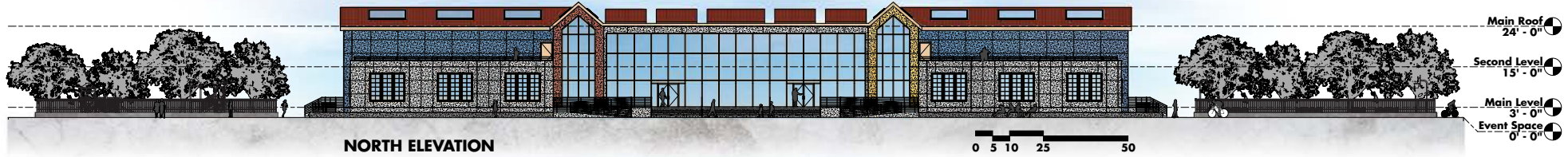


NORTH ENTRANCE RENDERING



SOUTH ENTRANCE RENDERING

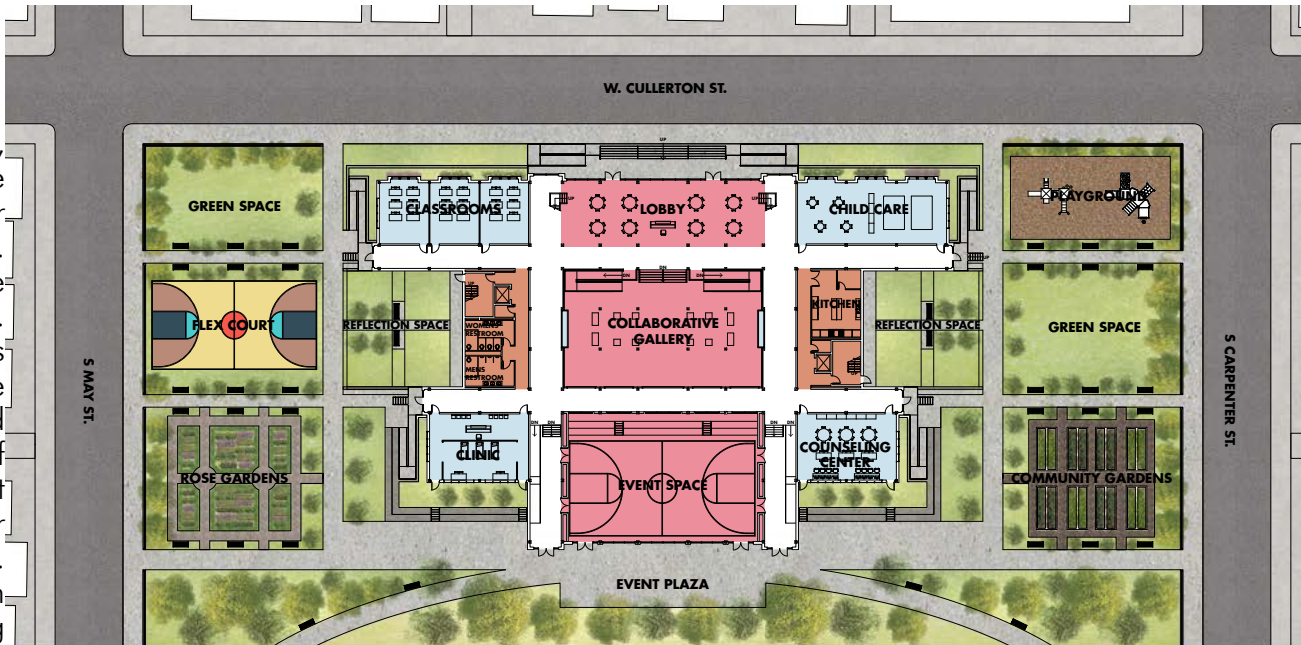
FORM PROCESS RESULTS



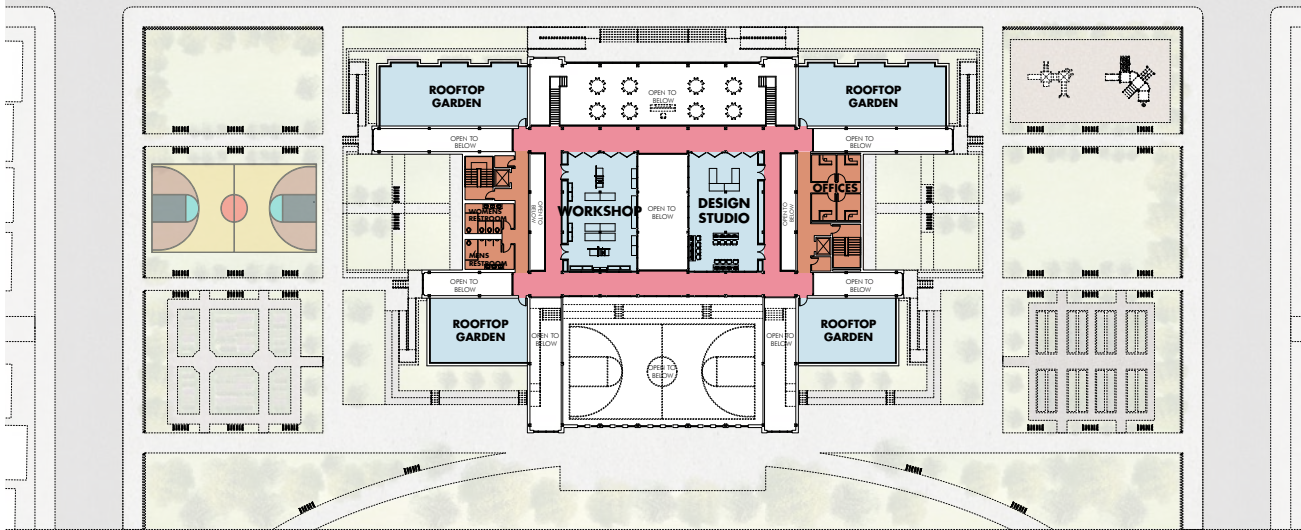
2.9UPLIFTING DESIGN RESULTS

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The results of the research, analysis, and design development can be seen in the floor plans. The redesigned community center can now hold more programs than before. This allows for more resources to benefit the neighborhood and have a positive impact. The final organization of the programs reflects the site as the programs are broken into three regions that are connected by primary and secondary corridors. The central region of the building host community development programs while the 4 wings and second-floor house the individual development programs. The site reflects the grid pattern established in the building floor plans while also providing additional programs such as rose gardens, playgrounds, and community gardens that would benefit the health of the neighborhood.



1st Floor



2nd Floor

A CENTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DANIEL RAMIREZ

BENEFICIAL SPACES RESULTS

WORKSHOP

This individual development space highlights the following design concepts:
Air Quality
Lighting
Sustainable Techniques
Inside Outside Relationship
Awareness of Surrounding
Material Selection
Collaboration



WORKSHOP RENDERING

LOBBY

This community development space highlights the following design concepts:
Air Quality
Accessibility
Lighting
Sustainable Techniques
Inside Outside Relationship
Awareness of Surrounding
Material Selection
Collaboration



LOBBY RENDERING

BENEFICIAL ATMOSPHERE RESULTS

EVENT SPACE

This community development space highlights the following design concepts:

- Lighting
- Sustainable Techniques
- Accessibility
- Inside Outside Relationship
- Blur Between Built and Environment
- Awareness of Surrounding
- Material Selection
- Collaboration



EVENT SPACE RENDERING

REFLECTION SPACE

This community development space highlights the following design concepts:

- Lighting
- Sustainable Techniques
- Accessibility
- Balance Between Built and Existing
- Oasis
- Material Selection
- Collaboration
- Color



REFLECTION SPACE RENDERING

BENEFICIAL ATMOSPHERE RESULTS

IMPACTS ON THE BUILDING

The decisions made during the design phase can set the community center up for success. These decisions can reduce operating costs, maintenance costs, and extend the life of the building.

PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS

The incorporation of flat roofs in the design allows for the placement of pv panels to reduce electricity costs.

OPERABLE GLAZING

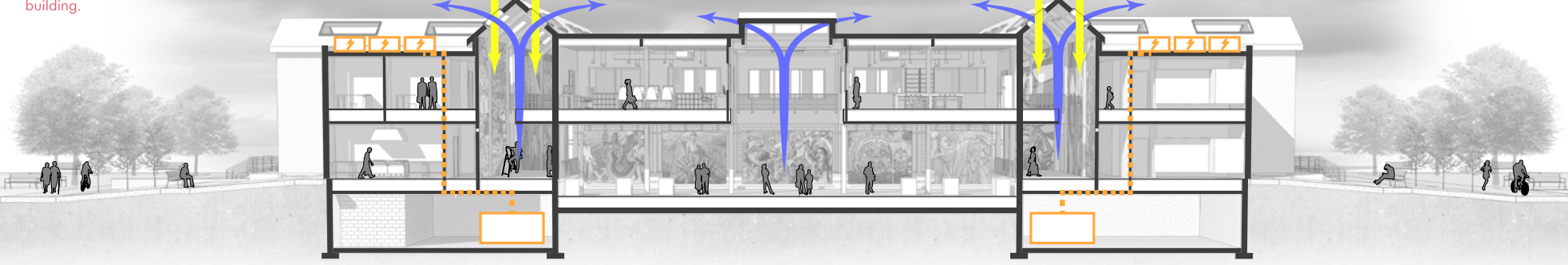
The design and placement of the skylights allows for sunlight to penetrate deeper into the building reducing the energy load and creating opportunities for cross ventilation.

SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Using sustainable materials such as glulam and fiber cement allows for the design to reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions during the material production and construction phase.

STACK EFFECT

The height of the corridor spaces allows for them to work hand-in-hand with the natural ventilation occurring in the building. This reduces the need and dependence of mechanical ventilation lowering costs.



IMPACTS ON THE USERS

The goal of all of each design concept is to create a beneficial environment for the occupants. This brings us back to the goal of creating a community center that benefits and serves the neighborhood.

SKYLIGHT

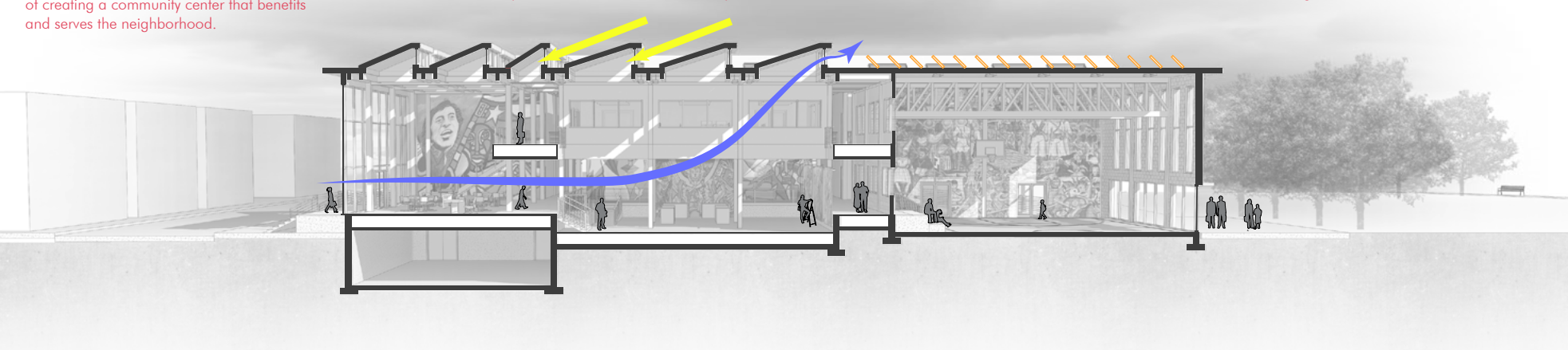
Benefits of additional sunlight throughout the building include increased efficiency + productivity, better student performance, and positive effects on the mood of the occupants.

CROSS VENTILATION

Cross ventilation helps improve indoor air quality improving the building environment. Many studies show this has a positive effect on the mood of the users.

URBAN PARK

Studies have shown that urban parks promote healthy lifestyles, benefit local economies, and help combat crime. The preservation the existing conditions was critical in the design.



BUILDING SECTIONS

2.10CONNECTING DESIGN RESULTS

COLLABORATION RESULTS

MAIN CORRIDOR

This community development space highlights the following design conepts:

- Lighting
- Sustainable Techniques
- Accesibility
- Awareness of Surrounding
- Material Selection
- Collaboration
- Color



MAIN CORRIDOR RENDERING

COLLABORATIVE GALLERY

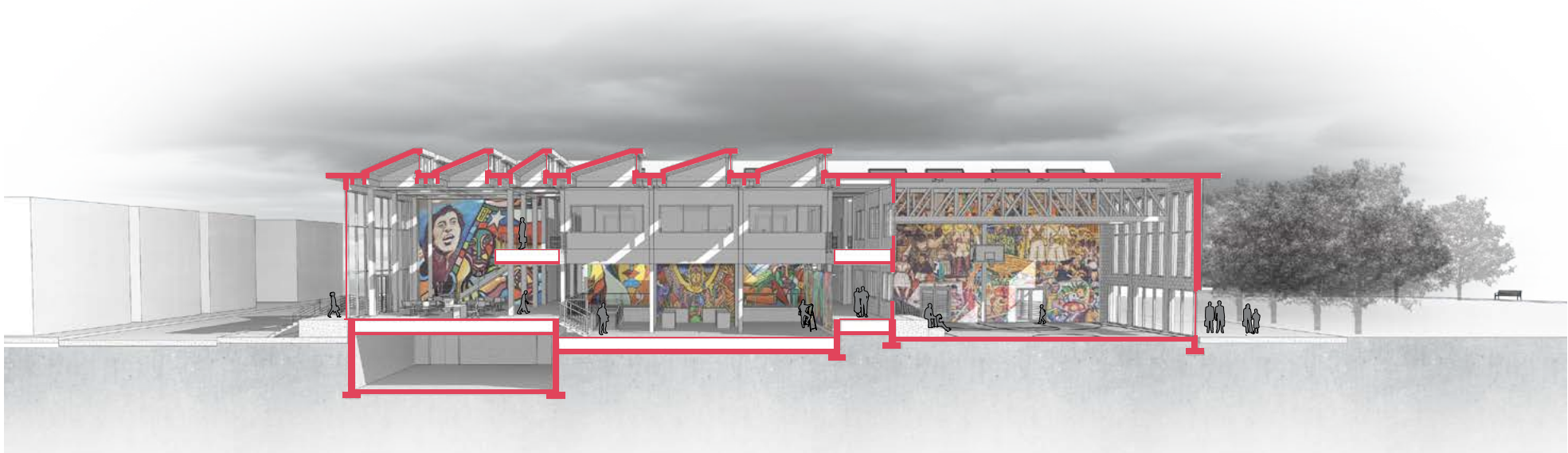
This community development space highlights the following design conepts:

- Lighting
- Sustainable Techniques
- Accesibility
- Awareness of Surrounding
- Material Selection
- Collaboration
- Color



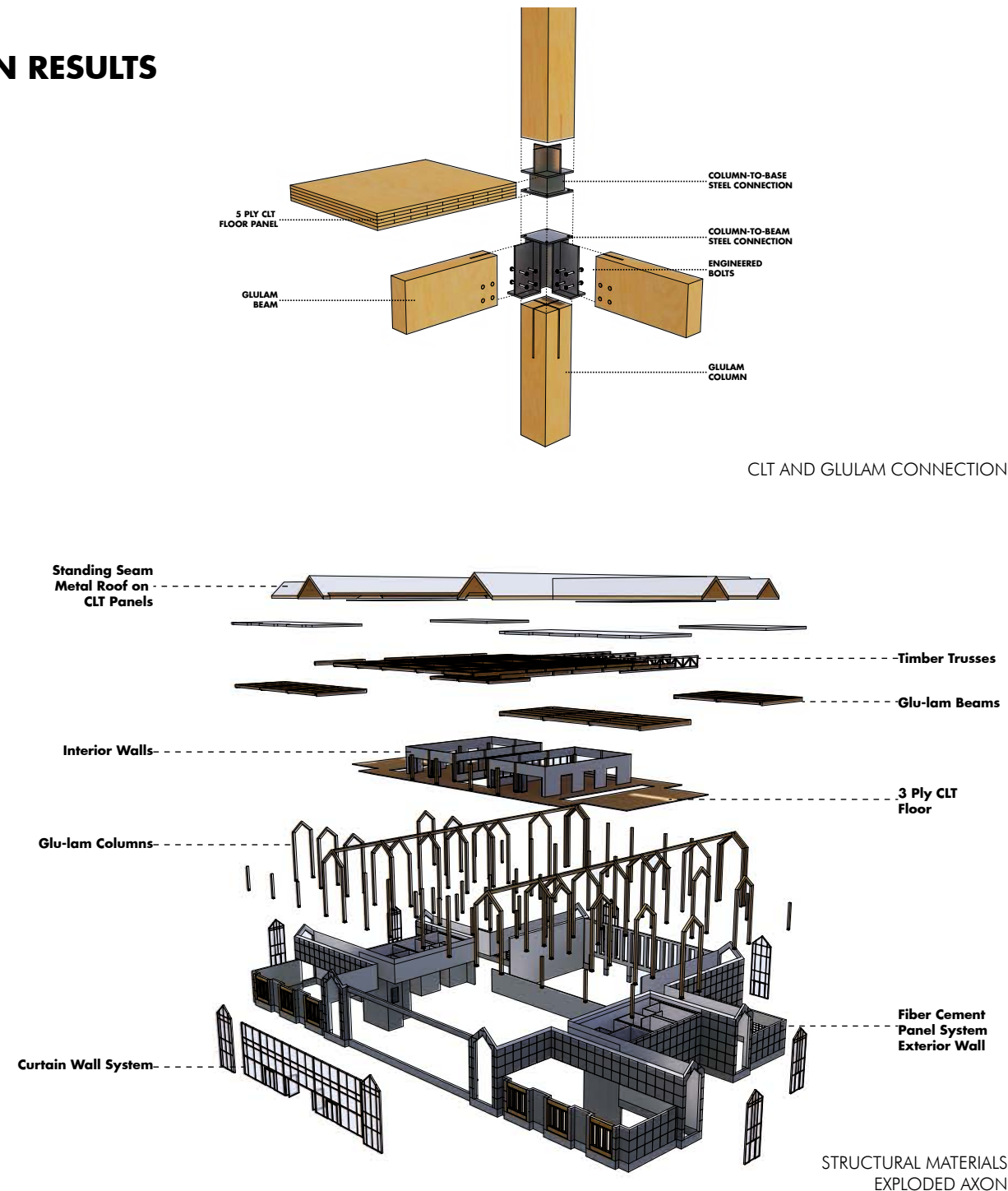
COLLABORATIVE GALLERY RENDERING

APPLICATION OF COLOR RESULTS

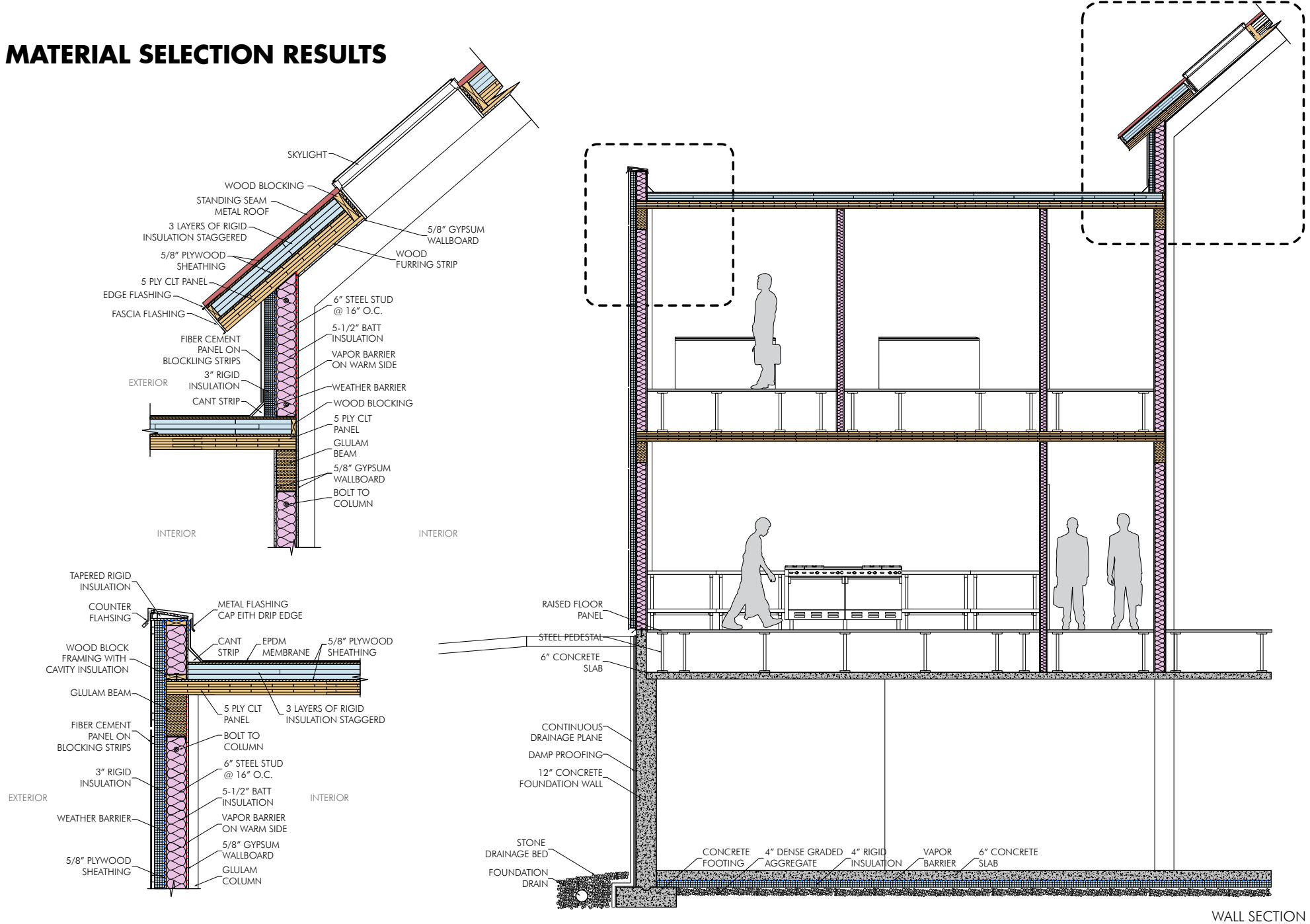


BUILDING SECTIONS

MATERIAL SELECTION RESULTS



MATERIAL SELECTION RESULTS



2.11 REFLECTION

REFLECTION

The original goal of the thesis was to help combat the whole process of gentrification. As the research began, the goal shifted away from this thought as a common pattern was seen. While new development intended to benefit neighborhoods and communities and provide new resources, the approach to it was wrong. The focus was on developing aesthetically pleasing structures that would grab the interest of new higher-paying tenants. The focus should have stayed on the existing residents. While the design is not yet final, I believe it can provide a precedent for new development going into the neighborhood. Qualities from the design can be reapplied to make a deeper connection and become meaningful spaces for the residents of a neighborhood.

As I prepare for graduation, I believe that every year was essential in my development. When I began my first year, I did not believe I would be able to reach where I am today. I know that through the connections I have made and the knowledge I have gained, I will be able to be successful in my career moving forward.

2.12 CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Initially, the goal was to redesign a community center that would provide resources for the existing residents to combat the process of gentrification. As the research phase ended and the design phase began, there was a shift in what was important. A community center can have all the resources in the world but without connection to the neighborhood, these resources provide no benefit. The design question asked how architects could be part of the solution in assisting neighborhoods who are dealing with gentrification. The design thesis listed 3 points critical to the success of the project:

insertion of appropriate programs

integration of cultural design

creation of meaningful spaces

I believe these three points hold equal importance in this project and factored into every decision made throughout the design.

2.13IMAGE CITATION

Sources

1.

Image by Daniel Ramirez

2.

Image by Daniel Ramirez

3.

Image by Daniel Ramirez

4.

Image by Daniel Ramirez

5.

District, Chicago Park. "Pickleball Courts at Dvorak." Chicago Park District. Accessed December 6, 2019. <https://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks-facilities/dvorak-anton-park>.

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Image by Daniel Ramirez

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Jones, Jenny. "Innovative Detail: The Pinch in Shuanghe Village, Yunnan Province, China." Architect Magazine. Accessed October 4, 2019. https://www.architectmagazine.com/technology/detail/innovative-detail-the-pinch-in-shuanghe-village-yunnan-province-china_o.

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Image by Daniel Ramirez

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Image by Daniel Ramirez

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